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ART. II. — *Does the Bible sanction American Slavery?* By GOLDWIN SMITH. Cambridge: Sever and Francis. 1863.

Is African slavery, as it exists in our Southern States, an evil or a good thing? Is it, or is it not, consistent with a high sense of duty to man and to God, and with the requirements of that state of Christian civilization which the foremost nations of the world have now reached? So far as the practice of those nations and the opinion of the best and wisest men of Christendom are authority to decide this question, it is decided. There is not a slave in modern Europe. Even Russia, semi-barbarous as yet, has recently abolished serfdom, a very different thing from African slavery, because the serf had rights, and the relation between him and his master was the relation of man to man, not of man to merchandise. England, France, and Denmark have abolished slavery in their colonies. Effete and Catholic Spain, whose government does not represent its people, and derives no life-blood from free and enlightened opinion, permits it in the West Indies. So, within her own borders, does Brazil, Catholic and half-civilized also, a despotism, an offshoot of Spain and Portugal, and degenerated even below the parent stock by a mongrel mixture of races which renders her progress in social or political improvement a slow, if not hopeless task. So also the government of the United States has not merely tolerated, but maintained and protected slavery. And why? Because it had no control over the subject. The several States had this control; and those of them most advanced in wealth and liberal culture have prohibited slavery within their limits. The power of the central government might be exercised to prevent the extension of slavery. This, and the growth of Northern sentiment averse to the institution, caused the present war.

It is needless to cite eminent names. The list would include nearly all the great thinkers — philosophers, historians, and poets — who have been the guides of thought from the birth of Christ till the present time, and it would include the founders of our own government, and most of its distinguished statesmen, many of them slaveholders. Authority, therefore, that is

to say, human authority, is all on one side. Until recently, indeed, the abstract moral question was almost universally regarded as settled. Slavery is an evil and a wrong. Few were bold enough to deny this. The only question was, Can it be got rid of, without causing greater evils and wrongs than its own?

Abstract truth, more especially moral truth, finds easy entrance into the mind and conscience. But concrete truth, truth manifested in fact and action, when great interests are connected with error and wrong, is sure to be resisted. Pure thought, too, as it passes into conduct, loses something of its purity and beauty, and becomes often soiled by the dross of human passion and selfishness. Liberty, equality, and fraternity were favorite and fashionable themes for the *savans*, the court, and the noblesse of France, in the age that preceded the Revolution. But when they took the form of a demand for a republic, instead of monarchy and aristocracy, they suddenly lost their charm for these enlightened classes. When they afterwards assumed the form of Robespierre and the guillotine and a mob frenzied with license and howling for blood, their very names became odious to the old world. So, a few years ago, it was very easy and very common for Southern slaveholders to admit, that to treat human beings as property is wrong, and that slavery is injurious to the best interests of society, when these propositions were coupled with another, — that it is for the slave-owners to say when and how slavery is to be altered or destroyed. But the truth wore a different aspect when a powerful party in the country demanded that the area of slavery should be restricted, and afterwards, as is now the case, that slavery itself should be abolished. Truth then became concrete, and instantly the pride of power and the lust of wealth arrayed themselves against it. It must also be said, that, when the pure and noble idea of liberty appeared, as it did among a small portion of this Northern party, in the guise of reckless abolition, heedless of consequences, and of a willingness, if not a desire and purpose, to light the flames of servile war in the South, freedom for the negro, like the liberty and equality of French Jacobins, unfortunately ceased to be a beautiful thing in the eyes of many even thoughtful

men. Freedom, to be a blessing, must bless both parties, him who gives and him who receives. If it cannot do this, it is not freedom, but a mere transfer of power from one portion of society to another.

But this world is governed by a good God and by moral laws; and moral truth, whatever abuses may be for a time connected with it, must in the end triumph. Slavery, as established in the Southern States, is wrong, and injurious, because it is wrong, to the best interests of society, — to religion, to morals, to science, to literature, to the arts, to industry, — for these can flourish only under the right, under the rule of justice and truth. This is the rock on which the argument against slavery is built, and so long as the foundation remains, the edifice cannot be overthrown. The Southern people discovered this, and, as soon as slavery was seriously menaced, they abandoned the faith of their ancestors, and boldly announced to the world, that slavery is founded in truth and justice, that it is the basis of liberty and civilization, and a blessing wherever it exists. As they could not cite in support of these dogmas the opinion of the age, the practice of the most enlightened nations, or the writings of the wise and good here or elsewhere, they went at once to the fountain-head of spiritual truth and moral law, and boldly claimed for the institution the sanction of the Bible. Slavery, they said, is expressly permitted and ordained in the laws of Moses. Christ was silent on the subject, and it was recognized and impliedly approved by St. Paul.

If all this be true, those who accept the Bible as their rule of conduct must bow to its authority. But before yielding to a conclusion which justifies oppression and condemns all that has been done to emancipate the negroes, it is well to inquire what sort of slavery was established by the Old Testament and recognized by the New, in what respects it differs from African slavery in the South, and whether any obligation is imposed upon us to perpetuate the latter.

The storm of war that is sweeping over our country has excited discussion on many questions vital to the interests of the people. This discussion is one of its compensations. Our whole system of government is on trial, investigation is compelled by the emergency of danger, new views are suggested,

weak points may be discovered, and in the collision of free thought, stimulated by great events and the jeopardy of great interests, old errors, hoary prejudices, and forms whose use has past, may be destroyed, as decayed trees of the forest are prostrated by a tempest, to make room for a new growth. Slavery, as the cause of the war, has received especial attention. Its Southern friends are indeed silent for a time, being fully occupied in defending it on bloody battle-fields. But it has advocates in our Northern States and in Europe; for the slave power had grown to such bulk, that it had become the basis of a political party in the North and of vast commercial interests in France and England. The argument drawn from the asserted sanction of the Bible has been revived, and the discussion which has ensued has had the good effect of enlarging our knowledge and vindicating the truth.

Among the publications induced by this controversy, the best we have seen is a little volume written in England, the title of which we have placed at the head of this article. As it is the production of a foreigner, it is likely to have the greater influence, because no sectional or partisan prejudice can be imputed to its author. Mr. Goldwin Smith is Professor of History at Oxford, and has a distinguished reputation, at home and abroad, of which this work is not unworthy. It is marked by clearness of thought and statement, extensive learning, liberal views, an elevated tone of thought befitting the topic, the earnestness of conviction, and a simple, grave, and forcible style. Critical and historical knowledge is necessary to understand many parts of the Bible, and this sort of knowledge is by no means universal, even among the educated. Most men, indeed, who condemn slavery, feel sure that it cannot be sanctioned by the Holy Scriptures, because it is opposed to the spirit and teachings both of the Old and the New Testament. Many are, however, not convinced, but puzzled, by the texts cited by the advocates of slavery. It is important, therefore, to show that the slavery of the South is not the slavery of the Bible; and this has been done by Mr. Smith.

There are two kinds of liberty, — political and personal. The former consists in a share of political power. To gain it, to keep it, and to exercise it for the good of society, implies a

degree of intelligence never possessed by a barbarous people, and by certain classes only of the more civilized. As nations advance in wealth and knowledge, this intelligence is more largely diffused. Intelligence means the power to think, and thinking produces the desire for action. As soon, therefore, as any portion of the people emerges from ignorance and poverty, public affairs become the objects of its intelligent curiosity and thought, and it demands the right to influence the action of government. When the masses of the people, or a portion of it, sufficient to represent the great interests of the nation, possess this right, such a people is said to possess political liberty. But those to whom this privilege is not extended are governed entirely by the will of those who possess it, or of one man, if he alone possesses it. Political liberty, therefore, or power over the conduct of government, is enjoyed now, as always, by a very small proportion of mankind. Free government belongs only to the most enlightened nations, to the most highly organized races. They only have been able, after a long and painful progress, to appreciate and desire it, to win and keep it. To be governed by the few, in all public affairs, is and always has been the lot of the vast majority of men.

Personal liberty is the power which a man has over himself, over his own actions and destiny, so far as these are not controlled by general laws affecting the whole community. Intelligence, combined with moral force,—what is called ability,—is the condition on which this sort of liberty can be enjoyed; for power is the inseparable attribute of ability, and loss of power of the want of it. Personal liberty is thus, like political liberty, the boon of advancing civilization, because civilization, by increasing the objects of desire and effort, stimulates and exercises varied talent. In the early stages of society, bodily strength and courage conferred power, because man was engaged in a struggle for subsistence with the untamed forces of nature and with fellow-men as savage as himself. The weak, therefore, sought the protection of the strong, because dependent upon, or the servants of, the strong. When communities were formed into nations, laws and policy were required, and demanded a new sort of ability, and intellect was enfranchised from the dominion of force. The security afforded by national

power and law developed industry and the arts. These enabled multitudes to take care of themselves, who were before dependent on individuals for protection. For the power of the individual was substituted the power of government, representing society, and men became personally free, masters of themselves, and governed, not by individual will, but by law, which, whether made by themselves or not, was the law for all.

Such has been the progress of society from the family to the tribe, to the nation, to established government, and from the arts of war to the arts of peace. During the whole of this progress, force of mind and force of character have always conferred power. The weak have ever been the servants of the strong, under the name of slaves, serfs, or vassals, because dependent on the strong; and servitude is another name for dependence. Not until society became stronger than any individual could men become free. And their freedom consisted in this, that, in return for protection, they gave service, duty, fealty, and obedience, not to a master or lord, for his own benefit, but to a king, magistrate, or ruling class; in short, to government, for the benefit of all, because it represents all.

Servitude, therefore, or the subjection of man to man, does not contradict the laws of nature. It represents the relation of weakness to strength. It has existed in all ages, and in all nations at some period of their growth. The condition of its presence is the existence of a class unfit to enjoy personal liberty, or the want of power in government to protect the rights of individuals; for personal liberty is a right, for those who can use it without injury to themselves or others. In the former case, personal liberty may be denied or restricted by law, and according to the necessity for that law, its humanity and justice, will the government that makes it be judged. It must not be a selfish law, intended exclusively for the benefit of the governing party, for power is eternally coupled with duty and responsibility. The ability to do good implies the obligation to do good, and he who has control over the happiness of another is a tyrant and a criminal, if in exercising that control he seeks only his own interest. The laws of the most enlightened nations give power to husbands over wives, to parents over children, to masters over apprentices. But

the power is intended for the benefit of both parties, and it is therefore carefully guarded and restricted so as to secure that benefit.

These are plain and simple principles, which, though often violated by human selfishness and passion, have always been vindicated and established more firmly by the consequences of such violation. No philosopher or moralist, whose name has become eminent, and held its place through the centuries as a spiritual guide and teacher, has ever advocated selfishness as a virtue, or denied the doctrine that all power, whether of an individual or of government, is trust-power, to be exercised for the well-being of both the governing and the governed party ; that a king ought to be the father of his people ; that a ruling class ought to rule for the benefit of all classes ; that the lord is bound to his vassal in mutual and reciprocal obligation, the master to his servant.

But the world has never been governed by philosophers, and history is a terrible record of disobedience to these precepts by those who have governed it, whether one or many, princes or parliaments, lords or masters. It is a record, too, of the punishment that waits on crime. An unjust and oppressive government cannot prosper, cannot endure. Sooner or later it is destroyed by the moral force of mankind, either from within or from without, by a domestic or a foreign power.

We have in this country four millions of negroes. They are of a race inferior to ours. They are, therefore, it is said, unfit to enjoy political liberty, or to exercise power over government. If this be so, they are rightfully deprived of that power, both for their own good and ours, and we of the superior race may govern them politically for the good of both. We are told, also, that they are unfit to enjoy personal liberty, to exercise power individually over themselves, to be governed each by his own will under the law. Is this true ? Let us grant it. What, then, is the duty of the superior race which has power over the negro ? Does not the possession of this power, by every principle of justice and humanity, make it a trustee for the negro ? What is meant when it is said that the negro is unfit for personal liberty ? Is it not that he is unable to take care of himself, — that he



requires a care-taker, a guide, a support, as a child does ? Are not those, therefore, who have power over him, who claim and take that power, bound to furnish the guardianship he needs, for *his* benefit, and, since his conduct and condition affect their interests, for their own also ?

How have we of the white race performed this duty ?

This question is answered by the Constitution of the United States, which permitted the slave-trade for twenty years, and slavery forever, slaves being regarded by both as articles of merchandise, existing wholly for the benefit of their owners. It is answered by the decision of the Supreme Court in the case of Dred Scott, in which the Chief Justice declares, that the public opinion of the civilized world at the time the Constitution was made, and which it was intended to express, and which is therefore binding on us, regarded negroes “ as beings of an inferior order, and altogether unfit to associate with the white race, either in social or political relations ; and so far inferior, that *they had no rights which a white man was bound to respect*, and that the negro might justly and lawfully be reduced to slavery for his ” (the white man’s) “ benefit. He was bought and sold, and treated as an article of merchandise and traffic, whenever a profit could be made by it.” Mr. Justice Daniel, in the same case, declares that a slave, under our law, “ is strictly *property*, to be used in subserviency to the interests, the convenience, or the will of his owner.”

The question is also answered by the laws of the Southern States, all of which proclaim that a slave is in all respects a chattel personal, and by the opinion of Judge Ruffin of North Carolina, quoted by our author (pp. 27, 28) : “ The question before the court has been assimilated at the bar to the other domestic relations, and arguments drawn from the well-established principles which confer and restrain the authority of the parent over the child, the tutor over the pupil, the master over the apprentice, have been pressed upon us. The court does not recognize their application. There is no likeness between the cases. They are in opposition to each other, and there is an impassable gulf between them. The difference is that which exists between freedom and slavery, and a greater cannot be imagined. In the one, the end in view is the happiness of the

youth, born to equal rights with that governor on whom the duty devolves of training the young to usefulness in a station which he is afterwards to assume among freemen. To such an end, and with such a subject, moral and intellectual instruction seem the natural means. Moderate force is superadded only to make the others effectual. If that fail, it is better to leave the party to his own headstrong passions and the ultimate correction of the law, than allow it to be immoderately inflicted by a private person. With slavery it is far otherwise. The end is *the profit of the master*, his security, and the public safety; the subject, one doomed in his own person and his posterity to *live without knowledge*, without the *capacity to make anything his own*, and to *toil that another may reap the fruits.*" To the same effect is the decision of Judge Field of Virginia, in 1851, in the case of *Souther vs. The Commonwealth*, 7 Grat-tan, 673: "It is the policy of the law, in respect to the relation of master and slave, and for the sake of securing proper obedience on the part of the slave, to protect the master from prosecution, even if the whipping and punishment be *malicious, cruel, and excessive.*"

These principles deny the obligation of the superior race to regard the happiness or improvement of the inferior, whilst they assert absolute dominion over it; they degrade the slave from his rank as a man, and convert him into a thing; they expose him without protection to the irresponsible control of his owner, and to the operations of two passions that have ever been the scourges of humanity, — the lust of money and the lust of power. He is denied every right of humanity, — liberty, personal security, mental improvement, moral elevation, property, wife, and child. He can acquire nothing by his labor, he can hold no relations to his fellow-men, he can make no contracts. So far as it can, the law reduces him from the position of a man to that of a brute. And why is this done? Because those who make the law have the power to do it. Though four millions strong, the negro has not force of mind and will or fitting opportunity to resist them. His weakness, his capacity for moral and intellectual improvement, for enjoying a higher destiny, for domestic happiness and affection, appeal in vain to the superior race, which is stronger than himself, and

because it is stronger devotes him and all his hopes and all his future to itself, as an instrument and a possession.

The gigantic selfishness of this system is less surprising than the bold and shameless avowal of it here, in republican America, and in the high noon of the nineteenth century. Servitude, or the dependence and consequent subordination of the weak to the strong, of the ignorant to the intelligent, of the poor to the rich, in some form, has existed in all ages, and must exist, so long as superior ability of mind and body creates disparity of condition and social inequality. The character of that servitude must necessarily vary with the progress of a people in civilization. The modern European laborer is the successor of the feudal serf, as the latter was of the Gothic slave before the Northern hordes overturned the Roman empire, and crystallized into nations. One characteristic of Christian civilization has been, that the law, representing advancing society, has more and more interfered to protect the weak and helpless from the selfish passions of the powerful, to extend the sphere both of personal and political liberty, to give man more and more to himself, and to yield government constantly to the influence of larger numbers of the people. The violation of the truth of nature, as well as of justice and humanity, by the degradation of man to the condition of a chattel, has been the work of nations either pagan or barbarous, except in the case of modern African slavery. The Egyptians, the Hindoos, the Persians, the Greeks, and the Romans held men as chattels, at every period of their history, from the rudest to the most refined. They made no distinction of race, but enslaved and made property of all alike, whenever they had the power. The slave-trade, domestic and foreign, flourished among them, and their laws were identical in spirit, frequently in positive provisions, with those of our Southern States. To this universal law and practice among ancient nations, the laws of Moses and the custom of the Jews were the only exception.

All law and government resolve themselves into custom, and are thus products and outward manifestations of the mental, moral, and material condition of a people. Laws change with that condition, and therefore change slowly. A new law is made to satisfy a new want caused by the gradual growth

or an alteration in the circumstances of a nation. Slow progress is, therefore, the general rule of society, sudden moral changes the exception, if indeed they ever occur. Even after a conquest, however complete, the conquered retain, of necessity, their laws, that is to say, their customs or habits of living, because these cannot be changed by the will of the conqueror. All institutions, therefore, represent the character of a people, as a crop shows the nature of the soil. As soon as we understand the condition of a people, we can understand their laws and government. To change these, we must change their nature. Reforms, therefore, which anticipate the future, which are before the age, cannot succeed. Men of genius, of extended views, of spiritual insight, prophets and inspired teachers, are always before their age. Such were Socrates, Plato, and Bacon, — such, in a far higher, the highest sense, was Christ. The world has not yet been able to catch up with them. Only a select few sit at their feet and understand their oracles.

This universal law of progress, of custom, as the necessary foundation of all institutions, explains history. It explains slavery. It shows its origin, its growth, the part it played, the good and the evil it did, how slaves came to be regarded as property by some, why they were ranked as men by others, how they came to be emancipated, and why they are still held as property by the barbarous tribes of Africa, by the Turks, by the Spaniards in the West Indies and the Portuguese in Brazil, and by our own Southern States.

Recent historical researches prove that the family was the monad, the germ, whence sprang the varied forms of society; that, as Mr. Smith says, “the political systems which now fill the world, with all their grandeur and complexity, once lay enfolded in the patriarch’s tent. So that in the patriarchal chief of an Arabian tribe we still see the father of empires and republics.” The head of the family, as the only government, had absolute power. As the members of a family increased, differences of mental and bodily force would create subordination; some would command and others obey; to some the inferior tasks of life would be assigned, and these would become *servants*. As the collateral branches of a family multiplied, these, drawn together by affinity of blood, united and

formed a tribe, under one chief. The protection of the tribe and its chief was essential to all, more especially to women. It was the interest of every one, therefore, to become a member of a family and of a tribe, whether he had or had not a claim to membership by reason of his blood. The price of protection was dependence, obedience, servitude. The power of the chief was necessarily despotic. It extended over the life and liberty of wife and child, as well as of the servant. In a rude age, it was exercised with rigor. Thence arose ancient slavery. Thence also polygamy and concubinage, in the warm climates and among the races of the East, where all three exist at the present day.

As population increased, conflicting interests would necessarily cause disputes, and these war, which seems a part of our nature in all conditions of society, savage or civilized. Among a barbarous people, war was barbarous. The humane usages of modern times have been the slow growth of civilization. The practice of the earliest times was to slay *all* enemies, probably because, when contending tribes were weak, this was the only security from renewed attack. To make captives of those who surrendered implied force enough to hold them as captives. This was a step forward in the progress of civilization. As the conqueror had a right, according to established custom, to the lives of the captives, he had also a right to their services. Service was the price of life, as to the poor and weak of the tribe it was of protection. An order of servants inferior to the latter was thus introduced into the tribe, because they were aliens, and had been enemies. These servants were distributed among the distinguished warriors of the tribe as part of the spoil, as laborers, as bondmen, as hand-maidens. They were valuable as instruments of wealth and ministers of pleasure. Thence arose the idea of property. Property is something useful which can be appropriated by an individual. Captives in war were useful. Over them there was absolute power, which was unrestrained by any sympathies or feelings of the family or the tribe, and beyond these, at that time, men's sympathies did not reach. Captives therefore were naturally, at this rude period, regarded as property, and as a consequence the subjects of barter and sale. Thence

chattel slavery, thence the slave-trade of the East, vestiges of which still remain.

We must not, however, confound the slavery of these primitive ages with the great slave commerce of modern times, or with the gangs of slaves afterwards collected on Roman estates, and now on Southern plantations. If slavery partook of the rudeness of this dawn of humanity, it partook also of its simplicity, its equality, its kindliness. Slavery had then a mission to perform. It softened the ferocity of war. It was a boon to the captives, who thereby escaped death. These were introduced into the tribe, increased its power, and thus led to the formation of a nation. As they who had lately been enemies could scarcely be trusted as soldiers, they became laborers, and thus industry was varied and extended, and out of industry grows wealth, commerce, and the arts. Captors and captives were moreover often of the same race. There was no marked disparity between them of culture or condition, where all were ignorant and few were rich. Talents, virtues, beauty, therefore made their impression, inspired respect, confidence, admiration, and love. Marriages, and connections which were considered almost equivalent to marriages, were formed between master and servant, and these introduced all the varied relations of life, with their kindly humanizing influences.

The relation of master and slave, therefore, was altogether a human relation, even when slaves were regarded as property in the early ages. They were domestic servants, members of the family and the household; and if sold, sold as such. They were not owned in vast numbers, or bred for sale, or bought in droves from dealers, or worked by overseers, or made the instruments of a great commerce. The human element predominated over the mercenary.

The Homeric poems and the Old Testament are almost the only records that we possess of this antique life. Patriarchal bondage among the Hebrews is thus described: "And Abraham was old and well stricken in age; and the Lord had blessed Abraham in all things. And Abraham said unto the eldest servant of his house, that ruled over all that he had, 'Put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh, and I will make thee swear by the Lord, the God of heaven and the God of

earth, that thou shalt not take a wife unto my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell ; but thou shalt go unto my country, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son Isaac.' . . . And the servant took ten camels, of the camels of his master, and departed ; for *all the goods of his master were in his hand* ; and he arose, and went to Mesopotamia, unto the city of Nahor. And he made his camels to kneel down without the city by a well of water, at the time of evening, even the time that women go out to draw water. And he said, ' O Lord God of my master Abraham, I pray thee, send me good speed this day, and show kindness unto my master Abraham. Behold, I stand here by the well of water ; and the daughters of the men of the city come out to draw water ; and let it come to pass, that the damsel to whom I shall say, Let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may drink ; and she shall say, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also ; let the same be she that thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac ; and thereby shall I know that thou hast showed kindness unto my master.' "

And so it came to pass, and this picture has remained graven on the world's memory ever since, because it is morally beautiful, because it is a picture of simple manners, of fidelity, mutual trust, and love. It bears no resemblance to the accounts we have of Athenian and Roman slaves, manacled, scourged, tortured, and nailed on crosses by their masters, of the porter chained to the door of Roman houses, or to Cato's advice, that slaves too old to work should be sold, together with old oxen and horses and worn-out tools of husbandry. Neither does it bear any resemblance to the teachings of the Dred Scott case, or to the decisions of Judge Ruffin and Judge Field quoted above, or to the descriptions of plantation life in the South given to us by Mrs. Kemble and Mr. Olmsted. Evidently the relation of master and servant was a human relation, not that of man to property. It was, as Mr. Smith says, " a relation of perfect affection and confidence, of complete identity of interest."

Of a similar character are Homer's pictures of the heroic age of Greece. The slaves were domestic servants, and the captives taken in war were not regarded as merchandise, but

members of the family. Penelope plies the spindle with her maidens ; Nausicaa, a king's daughter, goes with her female servants to wash clothes in a brook ; Ulysses, on his return, finds in his slave Eumæus a faithful steward and friend. The slave-auction, the slave-trader, the separation of families by the sale of children and of husband and wife, are nowhere described in these old books as among the customs of the age. There is, however, an important difference to be noted between the scenes painted by Homer and those in the Old Testament. In the latter there is no trace of cruelty or the oppressive exercise of authority. A spirit of justice and humanity, and a deep religious sentiment, pervade the narrative, as they do all of the sacred books. The Homeric poems are filled with violence and lust, both of men and gods. The gods are deified men, moved by human passions, and, under the influence of these, taking part in human affairs. Adultery was the cause of the Trojan war. The wrath of Achilles was roused by the refusal to give him a female captive, "blooming Briseis," whom he claimed as the spoil of war. Ulysses massacres the handmaidens of Penelope. Strength, valor, and subtlety are the qualities prized, martial glory is the highest glory, and the unrestrained gratification of sensual appetite and of angry passions is the characteristic of the hero. We look in vain for spiritual truth, for the perception of the infinite, for religious reverence, and for the maxims of justice and humanity with which the writings of the poets and prophets of the Old Testament are filled, and which have made it ever since an exhaustless mine of thought and wisdom, the teacher and guide of the foremost nations of the world. In pathos, in sublimity, in richness of imagery and simple grace, the Hebrew surpass the Grecian poets. These last are gradually receding into the dimness of the past, but the Books of Ruth and of Job, Ecclesiastes, the Psalms, the prophecies, and the grand and noble annals of Israel, will be preserved forever, as they have been for so many ages, in the minds and hearts of men.

"The word unto the prophets spoken  
Is writ on tables yet unbroken.  
The heedless world has never lost  
One accent of the Holy Ghost."



Whence this difference? Not surely in the inferiority of the Grecian intellect, so brilliant and profound in philosophy, poetry, and art,—in all these the instructor of the world. The reason is, that the gods of Greece were no gods at all, and there was nothing in the attributes ascribed to them which could elevate the soul or soften the heart, nothing which could develop and nourish the sentiment of duty to man as man, and enlarge the range of sympathy beyond the limits of self. The God of Abraham was the true God, one, invisible, the Lord of heaven and earth, uncreated, the Creator of all things, inscrutable, the supreme Ruler, omnipotent in power, perfect in goodness and wisdom. One great intellect among the Greeks rose to this sublime conception, but the philosophy of Plato was not the popular faith, and he lived after Paganism had done its work. The God of Abraham was emphatically the God of the people; his name was ever on their lips, his power and commands ever present to their minds; he was *their* God, their strength, their stay, their shelter, their defence, amid surrounding idolaters their enemies and his. It is impossible that men should recognize the existence and the presence of such a mighty and inscrutable being, their master and judge, should feel that his eye is ever upon them, without a sense of reverence and awe, without a desire to worship and obey.

Now Israel was taught that man was made in the express image of his Creator. Not that he resembled the Deity in outward lineaments, but because, as the record says, though formed of the dust of the ground, when God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, man “became a *living soul*.” A soul. Able, therefore, to perceive divine truth, and to know God as the finite can know the infinite. If to know him, then to reverence, to fear, to love him, for all these emotions necessarily arise from a knowledge of his attributes. If his creatures, then men are the objects of his care, his love, his justice, his mercy, and his punishment. To the wondrous being thus created God gave “dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of the air, and over every living *thing* that moveth upon the earth.” Over every *thing*. God alone was the Lord of *man*, and by God’s law, the law of justice and love,

was he to be governed. "Fear God and keep his commandments," said the great preacher of Israel, "for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil."

From this inspiring faith may be deduced the sublimity, the spirituality, and the noble sense of justice and humanity, which pervade the poetry, the philosophy, and the laws of the Hebrews, and from the belief that they were God's chosen and peculiar people sprang their narrowness and exclusiveness. When they departed from this faith, they went into paganism and idolatry, into degradation and suffering; whilst they kept it, they were victorious and happy. Out of it arose the brighter light, the wider scope, the higher law, the softer and more tender sentiment of Christianity. As the nations have accepted or refused this later dispensation, as they have kept it "in spirit and in truth," or departed from it, they too have grown to the power and blessing of civilization, or, remaining in or lapsing into idolatry and debasement, have decayed in all the elements of prosperity and progress.

The Hebrew faith explains the Hebrew law in all its provisions, but especially as it related to slavery. It explains why it was that one of the Hebrew race was never in any real sense a slave, but in his position much like a modern apprentice, as his term of service was limited unless he chose to extend it, and he was protected from the tyranny of his master. "If thou *buy* a Hebrew servant, six years shall he serve, and in the seventh he shall go out free for nothing. . . . For they are my servants, which I brought forth out of the land of Egypt; they shall not be sold as bondmen. . . . Over your brethren, the children of Israel, ye shall not rule one over another with rigor. . . . And when thou sendest him out free from thee, thou shalt not let him go away empty; thou shalt furnish him liberally out of thy flock, and out of thy floor, and out of thy wine-press; of that wherewith the Lord thy God hath blessed thee thou shalt give unto him."

Neither Greek nor Roman hesitated, as our author says, to reduce his countrymen "to that permanent bondage which

alone can be properly called slavery. In the early times both of Athens and Rome, we find numbers of the poor reduced to slavery by the rich. And in the wars between Grecian states, whole communities when vanquished are swept into hopeless and irredeemable bondage by the people of their own race." *Their* gods could not protect them.

The Hebrew, however, was narrow and exclusive. He was of the chosen people. Idolaters were the enemies of his God. "A Hebrew was his brother, the foreigner was not his brother." In the same spirit with which Christians afterwards, when Christians became also narrow and exclusive, regarded heretics and infidels, did he regard the heathen. Thence another class of servants and another law.

"Both thy bondmen and thy bondmaids which thou shalt have, shall be of the heathen that are round about you; of them shall ye buy bondmen and bondmaids. Moreover, of the children of the stranger that do sojourn among you, of them shall ye buy and of their families that are with you, which they begat in your land; and they shall be your possession."

What was the position of the Hebrew bondman of this class? Did he become a mere chattel? Did he lose his rank as a man, as a "living soul"? Were the paths of moral and intellectual improvement barred against him? Had he no rights which a Hebrew was bound to respect? Mr. Smith has answered these questions. We have not space to quote the details of his argument. He shows the humane spirit of the law, from its provisions in relation to the poor and to "strangers"; that restraints were imposed on the authority of the master, not found in the codes of Greece and Rome or in those of other pagan nations; that the slave might be a witness; that he was regarded as a member of the family of his master; that the power of the master was not greater than that of the husband and father over wife and child; that, if he was bought, so often was a wife, and he, like her, was bought as a human being, invested with human rights, and to hold human relations to his master and to society.

The crowning proof of this, however, is, that, among a people holding itself aloof from all others, and under a theocracy in

which religious ceremonials were numerous, strictly observed, and endowed with peculiar significance and solemnity, the foreign bondman was adopted into the nation by the distinguishing rite of circumcision, and his presence enjoined at the most august festivals of the church. The Sabbath was to him also a day of rest; he was a member of the congregation, and united with his master in worship of the God of Israel; he partook with him at the feast of unleavened bread, the feast of weeks, the feast of tabernacles, and, more important than any, at the high solemnity of the Passover. "This is the ordinance of the Passover. There shall no stranger eat thereof; but every man's servant that is bought for money, when thou hast circumcised him, then he shall eat thereof." The slave, therefore, was not a thing; he was a "living soul," to whom were opened by the *Law* the fountains of eternal truth.

We can only make a passing allusion to the remarks of our author, by which he proves that the Mosaic laws did not encourage even the qualified slavery which they permitted, but, on the contrary, discouraged and at length almost extirpated it, by providing checks and hinderances to the four chief causes of slavery, — conquest, kidnapping or piracy, penal servitude, and debt; and that the Hebrew nation was never marked by those characteristics which distinguish a slaveholding community, — slave-markets, runaways, insurrections, guards, dread, cruelty, the decay of industry, the impoverishment of the soil. These are the social features of our Southern States, as they were of pagan Greece and Rome. The nation of Moses was not a slave power.

Nevertheless, the Mosaic law does recognize, ordain, and regulate slavery; and not only slavery, but also polygamy, concubinage, the massacre of conquered enemies, the making captives of the inhabitants of cities taken by storm, the right of private revenge, and other customs shocking to the cultivated thought and sensitive moral feeling of civilization. Were these things, then, commanded by God? Are they divine, and therefore binding on us? The answer is easy. Yes, they may be called divine, if they naturally belong to a certain period of the growth of society. No, they are not binding on us, they are no justification for us, the condi-

tions of whose social state are different. The institutions we now possess will in time become unfit and pass away. But the principles on which they are founded, so far as they are true, will not pass away. They will survive to animate new forms ; for institutions are fleeting, and truth is eternal.

“ The one remains, the many change and pass ;  
Heaven’s light forever shines, earth’s shadows fly.”

It is for us to use for worthy ends what we have, and constantly to aspire to something better. Moses did this. He found the Hebrews in the transition state between the tribe and the nation. Their institutions or customs were such as belong to that state. He improved them, he informed them with the spirit of divine justice and truth, he directed them to noble ends, and he thus opened the way to a higher law.

He could do nothing else. He was the liberator, the law-giver of a semi-barbarous people, the founder of their future nation. Had he attempted to abolish their customs by law, he would have failed, because, as already stated, all law is custom, and all changes must be gradual, for customs and institutions grow out of the mental and moral condition of the people, and therefore cannot be altered wholly or suddenly by any external human power. Neither can they by divine power, without, as our author expresses it, taking men out of their own hands, which is not the rule of God’s dealings with men, and certainly was not the rule of his dealings with the Jews. To be free, men must be free to disobey his will, as the Jews were to their cost. Slow progress is the law of humanity. Why it is so, why evil is able to maintain its ground, why ignorance and sin have power to resist knowledge and virtue, why the battle between right and wrong, between truth and falsehood, has been fought so long, and is still fighting, are dark mysteries of our nature. We can only trust that, as part of the plan by which this world is governed, they form with the rest a symmetrical whole, working for ultimate good, founded on necessary laws, and not causing, even in the present, unmixed evil.

Moses, therefore, in an age of barbarism, could not convert a barbarous people into a civilized, enlightened, and humane community, without a miracle that would have destroyed

their moral responsibility, and made of them, not men, but machines. He could not abolish polygamy, concubinage and slavery and despotism, cruelty to enemies in war, the right of asylum and the "avenger of blood," and introduce marriage and free labor, the trial by jury, the writ of *habeas corpus*, a free press, and popular representation, without anticipating the work of many centuries, and the slow and painful process by which man reaches a higher destiny. It would have been as useless to put a steam-engine or a printer's press into the hands of the Jews, as any of these institutions, the result of ages of effort and gradual change. What he could do, consistently with the laws of man's nature, he did. He took the institutions and manners of the people as he found them, and infused into them the principles of justice and humanity, of reverence for God and love for man. All laws, all human relations, may be thus elevated, purified, and softened, and thus the way be opened for better laws and nobler relations.

Mr. Smith has shown, historically, "that the laws of Moses were not a new code, but a revision of the old customary law of the nation." In what spirit and for what purpose this revision was made, what changes were introduced by which barbarous usages were ameliorated and turned to good ends, our author has also forcibly and clearly explained. For the details of his argument we must refer our readers to the book itself.

We have thus, with the aid of Mr. Smith, endeavored to show that the slavery of the Old Testament was a very different thing from slavery in our Southern States. But we are not Jews, we are Christians; and the advocates of the institution claim that Christ by his silence impliedly, and his Apostles by their writings expressly, recognized and sanctioned even the ferocious and terrible system of slavery of pagan Rome, in the most profligate and corrupt period of its history.

It is not necessary to spend much time in refuting an assertion so monstrous, which, if true, or generally received as true, would roll back the wheels of time from civilization to barbarism, and undo all that Christianity has done since its founder died for man on the cross. The preceding argument, by which the ameliorations introduced by the Mosaic law are deduced as a necessary consequence from the faith of Israel in the one,

invisible God, apply with greater force to the Christian dispensation. The former is to the latter what the river is to the sea. The religion of the Jews was narrow and exclusive; the mission of Christ was to all. Moses was the lawgiver of the Hebrews; the son of David was the Son of man, — therefore the brother of all men. He was also the Son of God, who, therefore, is the Universal Father. “The Hebrews,” says Mr. Smith, “had, like all other ancient nations, a national deity, whose name was Jehovah. The national deity of the Hebrews, unlike those of other nations, was God indeed. All his attributes were those of the true God, though but partially revealed, and his worship has consequently passed into the worship of the Universal Father, without break or incongruity, as the light of dawn brightens and broadens into the light of day.”

Christ, therefore, did not come to destroy the law or the prophets. “I am not come to destroy,” he says, “but to fulfil.” “*Fear* God and keep his commandments,” said the Preacher of Israel, “for this is the *whole* duty of man.” “Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of *thy* people,” was the injunction of Moses, “but thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” Christ took a higher and wider view both of worship and of love. “Thou shalt *love* the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” The neighbor in the Mosaic law was a Jew; the neighbor in the law of Christ was every man. Is it possible to love your neighbor as yourself, and, at the same time, convert him into an instrument for your own selfish gain? The law of Moses, because man was created by their Jehovah a “living soul,” gave to the servant bought of the heathen the rank of a man, not of a thing, as the heathen did. Is it conceivable that Christ, who came to fulfil that law, to give to it a larger meaning, and to its spirit a wider application, intended, when he declared that God was the *Father* and *all* men his children, to make some of them property, as the Romans did, or to declare, with Chief Justice Taney, that *any* of them were without rights which a Christian was bound to respect?

Moses was a lawgiver, and governed the conduct of men

from without. Christ was a messenger of divine truth, and governed them from within, by their convictions. Moses ruled over the masses by means of barbarous institutions, which, as before explained, he could only modify, not change. Christ found barbarous institutions, and he undermined and finally destroyed them, by entering into the heart and conscience of the individual. The nation of Israel has long since passed away. The kingdom of Christ is a confederacy of the most powerful nations in the world. It has become so because it is founded, not upon institutions, but upon truth; for institutions change and pass, but truth remains. Institutions are mere outside forms. They are created by the informing spirit, as the shell of a lobster is shaped by the living and growing animal. When the spirit grows beyond the form, institutions are like the abandoned shell, like husks and chaff.

Had Christ, by the exertion of supernatural power, suddenly changed the institutions of the Roman Empire, it would have availed nothing, unless he had also changed the Romans themselves. He could not *thus* have changed them, without destroying their free agency, their moral responsibility, all the merit and benefit of voluntary moral action, — without also violating the law of progress, which, as already said, is the law of humanity. Moreover, had he thus suddenly changed the social and political institutions of Rome, what would he have given them instead of despotism, chattel slavery, the shows of gladiators, and the wild beasts of the amphitheatre? Would he have revived the Republic, — or, anticipating the centuries, produce the feudal monarchies of the Middle Ages, with vassalage and chivalry and the tournament, — or the English Constitution, or our own, — or some other form yet veiled by the curtain of the future?

Not in this way did he exercise miraculous power. To otherwise change suddenly the institutions of the Roman Empire was impossible. As a man, he was poor and obscure, and so were his followers. An attempt to excite a rebellion against the government, or a servile revolt, would have failed. Had it succeeded, the success would have been local and transient, unless founded on individual conviction of the



truth that liberates, as only the truth can. Therefore upon a truth — the truth of the universal fatherhood of God and the universal brotherhood of men — did Christ found his universal Church and his universal kingdom. Such is the power of the invisible idea. It enters into one mind ; it spreads by the contagion of sympathy ; it becomes the thought of many, of all. Thought governs action, and institutions are men's ways of acting according to their thought. Therefore Christ's kingdom was likened by him "to a grain of mustard-seed, which indeed is the least of all seeds, but, when it is grown, is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof"; and "unto leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened." He declared that his kingdom was not of this world. It was a spiritual kingdom, which in the end commanded all, because it was spiritual. But the time for outward triumph had not come ; and so he said, "Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's," — these were, submission to established government and obedience to the law, — "and unto God the things that are God's," — these are, love to him and to thy neighbor. The spirit of this reply placed afterwards a Christian Emperor on the throne of the Cæsars, and, at a later period, a Christian pontiff on the throne of the Emperors.

"The servant is not greater than his lord ; neither is he that is sent greater than he that sent him." We find, therefore, in the precepts of the Apostles, the principles of Christ carried out. They did not become agitators or demagogues, nor seek, prematurely, to overturn established government by revolution. They found the Empire a despotism, and Tiberius, the most sensual, heartless, and cruel of the Emperors, on the throne. They found Judæa a prey to tyrants as sensual and cruel, who were supported by the central despotism at Rome. They found chattel slavery firmly established as an "institution," though not a "*peculiar*" one, as it was in keeping with the violence, oppression, and corruption around it. "Nevertheless," to use the language of our author, "our Lord and his Apostles said not a word against the powers or institutions of that evil world. Their attitude towards them all was that

of deep spiritual hostility and of entire political submission. The dominion of a foreign conqueror, the presence of his soldiery, the extortions of his tax-gatherers, the injustice of his judges, the iniquitous privileges of the conquering Roman, the iniquitous degradation of the conquered Jew, — all these, as well as slavery, are accepted with unquestioning resignation. The things which are Cæsar's are rendered unto Cæsar, though Cæsar is a Tiberius or a Nero. To endure patiently the dominion of these monsters, it has been truly said, was the honor of Christianity and the dishonor of mankind."

The precepts of the Apostles, by which this submission to existing institutions is enjoined, have been cited recently in support of our Southern slavery, as they have been heretofore in support of political tyranny. But they cannot be used except in accordance with their meaning and purpose. When so used, they are of universal application. They inculcate submission to even a bad government, when resistance would be premature and hopeless, for the order of a bad government is better than the anarchy of none. They exhort servants to obey their masters with fidelity, for obedience and fidelity mitigate all servitude, and may be the means of spiritual growth and elevation. Rebellion, to be justifiable, must promise, not merely success, but something better, to be established by success, than the system rebelled against. Neither of these conditions existed, at the time of the Apostles, in the Roman Empire. Their language does not imply approval of the evil institutions of their age, but, on the contrary, deep spiritual hostility and spiritual warfare against them and all forms of oppression, — the only warfare by which oppression, when supported by worldly power, can be attacked and finally overthrown.

The advice given to slaves, that they should obey their masters, is good advice to all servants, everywhere and at all times. It applies equally to the negro on Southern plantations and to the "help" in Northern homes. It applies to all laborers, to all whose lot it is to serve and obey; and if observed, it would promote the happiness of Southern plantations, and of Northern farms, factories, and firesides. And why? Because obedience and fidelity are the duties of all

servants, high or low. Duties not to the master only, but to God also, who has appointed them to that station.

“ A servant with this clause  
Makes drudgery divine ;  
Who sweeps a room, as for Thy laws,  
Makes that and the action fine.”

In this spirit is the exhortation of St. Paul : “ Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh ; not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart, fearing God. And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as *to the Lord*, and not unto men. Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance, for ye serve the Lord Christ.” Did St. Paul regard those whom he thus addressed as “ chattels personal,” as beings rightfully doomed, according to Southern law, as announced by Judge Taney and Judge Ruffin, “ to live without knowledge,” and the end of whose existence is “ the profit of the master ” ?

But if a servant has duties, so also has the master. “ Masters,” continues the Apostle, “ give unto your servants that which is just and equal ; knowing that ye too have a Master in heaven,” — “ neither is there respect of persons with him.” (Coloss. iii. and iv. ; Eph. vi.) Now, what sort of equality is here meant ? Not surely that which is inconsistent with the human relation of master to servant ; but as surely an equality which is inconsistent with the relation of man to property, — one, too, that is inconsistent with any system of slavery or servitude which authorizes or permits injustice or oppression, and which regards exclusively the interest of the master. In these words is declared the true equality of men, as spiritual beings, as creatures of God, as members of the brotherhood of Christ. Far different is the law of Virginia, according to the decision of Judge Field, quoted above, which sanctions any degree of punishment by the master, even though it be “ malicious, cruel, and excessive.”

The words of St. Paul are a proof of his “ deep spiritual hostility ” to the slavery of Rome, which accompanied his “ political submission ” to that system. These simple words struck slavery in its vital point. They went at once to its fountain source. “ Give unto your servants that which is

*just and equal.*” Persuade all masters to do that, and slavery would vanish. Persuade all governments to enforce that command, and slavery would be destroyed. In this manner Roman slavery *was* destroyed ; so was mediæval vassalage ; so Russian serfdom ; so negro slavery in the British, French, and Danish colonies ; and so, we trust, will emancipation triumph in our Southern States.

But, it is said, St. Paul sent back a fugitive slave to his master, giving thus, by active interference, his sanction to the Roman law. It is true that St. Paul did send Onesimus, who, under his teaching, had become a Christian, to Philemon, his master, also a Christian, and thus submitted to that law. But with him he sent a letter, exhorting Philemon to receive him, “ not *now* as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved.”

The Southern people tell us, that, under their training, the African has become a Christian. When they receive their runaway negroes, who are sent back to them in obedience to the law, as fellow-Christians, “ not as servants, but as brothers beloved,” the mission of St. Paul and his Master to both will be accomplished.

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ART. III. — *Report on the Art of War in Europe in 1854, 1855, and 1856.* By COLONEL R. DELAFIELD, U. S. A. and Major of the Corps of Engineers, *from his Notes and Observations made as a Member of a “ Military Commission to the Theatre of War in Europe,” under the Orders of the HON. JEFFERSON DAVIS, Secretary of War.* Washington : George W. Bowman, Printer. 1861.

It is not our purpose in this article to express any opinion upon the merits of this great compilation of the results of an accomplished soldier’s observation. We propose to make some remarks upon the Ambulance System established in the armies of the United States, and we find in Colonel Delafield’s Report important illustrations of our subject in his account of